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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

REPORT

INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY

East Germany

DATE DISTR. 5 April 1957

SUBJECT

Vietmannsdorf (Schorfheide) Airfield

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SUPPLEMENT TO

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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

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In December 1952, little progress was made on the grinding of the joints on the runway at Schorfheide airfield due to the fact that 8 of the 20 grinding machines were defective. If there was a shortage of grinding wheels. Since recently, the joints had to be ground to a depth of 16 cm instead of only 11 cm as previously observed. The three holes in the eastern, western and middle sections of the runway, where concrete slabs had been removed for experimental purposes, were not yet concreted. In mid-December, another large block of concrete was dug out of the runway by means of pneumatic hammers.

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During the first half of December, the clearing in the southeastern section of the field was considerably enlarged and extended in length (forest sub-district) 153, 154 and 155 beyond the southern boundary of the airfield. During the second half of December, there was no clearing work under way but the cut wood and excavated roots were hauled away. Another clearing was located in the northwestern section of the field.

In mid-December, concreting work on the 15-20 cm thick approach road to the fuel dump was completed. The cover plates for the four fuel containers in the fuel dump were still missing. A railroad siding, about 400 meters long and with a switch at each end, was being laid between the fuel dump and the railroad line south of the dump. There were three pumps for the unloading of railroad tank cars along this rail siding east of the fuel dump, the foundations for two houses and a small concrete ramp which sloped towards the railroad siding, which was under construction. A waiting room for passengers en route to and from the field was under construction south of the railroad line and south of the fuel dump.

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25 YEAR RE-REVIEW

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4. The concrete road to the ammunition dump near Kurtsschlag running through Jagen 103 and 115 was almost completed by mid-December. West of this road and along rail siding No 3, construction work was under way on 1.2-meter-high concrete ramps. Behind these ramps, three ammunition houses, each about 25 x 10 meters, were also being built. Each of the ammunition houses had five apertures through which rails were observed being laid in mid-December. Small windows, about 1 meter above the ground, were observed on the narrow sides of the ammunition houses. In December, coarse and fine chippings and gravel were unloaded at the ammunition dump. A large temporary building of brick construction was observed at the end of the rail siding.
5. Concreting work on the road leading from the headquarters buildings to the Vietmannsdorf-Gross Doelln road was completed. This road was allegedly to be extended to as far as the ammunition dump.
6. A connecting line was being laid from the old transformer station south of the western road intersection in Grossvaster to the new transformer station northeast of this intersection. From the latter transformer, the power line extended along a clearing to the quartering buildings in the southeastern corner of the cantonment. East of fuel dump I, work was nearing completion on a new transformer house but had not yet been connected to the electric mains.
7. The Soviet guard company was relieved on 10 December. Also the ammunition dump had been guarded by double sentries during December. Allegedly, the old guard unit was negligent in the performance of its duties.
8. At the end of December, the grown soil on both sides of the runway was removed and, allegedly, marshy soil was to be raised, avoiding straight lines for camouflage purposes.
9. At the beginning of January 1954, [redacted] on the basis of the status of the field as of December 1953, the following construction work was scheduled to be done at the field in 1954: dispersal areas; completion of fuel dump I; fuel dump II; road fuel dump I to fuel dump II; ammunition dump II; dump for technical equipment along the railroad line north of Jagen 160; excavation work and sowing of grass on both sides of the runway; and a main transformer house. A total construction sum of 17 million eastmarks was mentioned and included 7.5 million eastmarks for dispersal areas.
10. [redacted] 1,101 laborers were employed by the Brandenburg Bauunion at Schorfheide airfield on 4 January 1954.
11. At the beginning of January 1954, a rail siding branched off northwest of Kurtsschlag from the Vogelsang-Schorfheide airfield railroad line to the ammunition dump under construction. At this point, work was being done on a second rail siding of which about 30 meters were completed by mid-January. Three roads branched off from the concrete road in the ammunition dump and three ramps were located along the concrete road. Along these ramps, construction work was being done on ammunition houses each of which was about 20 x 15 meters. In mid-January, work was being done on the roofs of these houses. Rails extended from the hangars to the spur track. Some low wooden buildings could also be identified in the ammunition dump.

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12. [redacted] construction superintendent Mamani (fnu), who previously supervised construction work on the outer freight ring of Berlin, was to be charged with construction work at Schorfheide airfield.
13. In conjunction with construction work at the airfield, it was temporarily rumored that Vietmannsdorf would be vacated. Recently, however, rumors have it that the evacuation would not be carried out.
14. On 7 January, the officers of the Soviet construction staff at the field attended a conference at the Soviet construction headquarters in Werder which resulted in an order to cancel work on the dispersal areas at the field. In mid-January, however, Colonel Khomotov (fnu) ordered that excavation work on the planned dispersal areas on both sides of, and 50 meters from, the axis be completed. The Soviets said that, in the near future, an engineer from Moscow would arrive who would decide on further construction work on the spot. Soviet officers stated that only a portion of the required work was done at the field as yet. The German construction staff assumed that a second taxiway was planned to be built north of the runway. [redacted] underground installations between the runway and taxiways would be constructed. However, no construction plans or records on these assumed installations had as yet arrived at the German construction staff. Effective 1 January, various organizational changes occurred probably in connection with the termination of reparations deliveries by the Soviet Zone of Germany. The German construction staff had the impression that the financing of construction work at the field was not definitely settled. During a conference, statements were made that the work force at the field would probably be increased in 1954 when compared with 1953.
15. In mid-January, about 1,000 workers, including about 200 technical personnel for the operating of equipment and machines, were employed at the field by the Bauunion Brandenburg. During the frost period in early January, concreting and brick laying work had to be discontinued and the construction staff intended to dismiss about 500 workers. The dismissal, however, was forbidden by the Central Committee of the SED district concerned, for political reasons. Therefore, the surplus workers were scheduled to be detached to the flooded area along the coast. This plan, however, was not executed as the coastal areas were not in a state of emergency. Meanwhile, it began to thaw and construction work could be resumed on 18 January. There was enough work to employ the available workers for 6 to 8 weeks.
16. Construction work on fuel dump I reached the following stage on 9 January 1954: Before the containers were closed on top, tightness tests were made, with a total of 10,000 liters of petroleum used. During the first half of January, the containers were covered with sheet iron. Each container was surrounded by a concrete shrapnelproof wall. Iron girders were being laid between the container and the shrapnelproof wall for a catwalk. Finally, the containers were to be covered with earth, leaving open only the entrance hatches and vent pipes. Work on the pumping station and electric installation was completed, except for the connecting line to the electric mains. There were three pumps for the discharge of fuel from railroad tank cars and 3 pumps for the transfer of fuel from the fuel containers to the tank trucks. On 9 January, work was completed on two oil dumps, the laboratory, a lavatory, and, except for some minor work, the covering of the empty containers with reinforced concrete roofs. Two containers with water for extinguishing purposes were built of reinforced concrete and covered with NP-34 type girders lined with concrete slabs and the joints filled with concrete. This solid cover had a round lid in the middle. During the spring of 1954, the main roads in fuel dump I were to be concreted and the by-ways and aprons were to be paved. A fence was under construction around the fuel dump.

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17. Work scheduled to be done in the ammunition dump during the first construction stage was approximately completed by mid-January. Of the three planned ammunition houses, only the framework was completed and the planking of the roofs was laid. Toward the spur track, each ammunition house had five large gates through each of which two rails were being laid. The laying of rails was not yet completed by mid-January. During the second construction stage, three additional ammunition houses were to be built at another spur track, in addition to some smaller ammunition houses. The Soviet sentries who previously guarded the ammunition dump were meanwhile replaced by German personnel.
18. The German construction staff continuously had difficulties with the Soviet construction headquarters in Leipzig in regards to the settling of accounts. A total sum of 27 million eastmarks had been expended for construction work at the field by the end of 1953. Of that sum, the Soviets refused to pay about 1 million eastmarks for construction expenses. In January 1954, the construction headquarters in Leipzig dismissed personnel and sold machines and equipment. Lieutenant Colonel Romanenko (fnu) who was on furlough was replaced by Major Oleinik (fnu) on 9 January 1954. Major Kovbaza (fnu) was to return to the USSR on 25 January. Major Alekseyev (fnu) who was responsible for the supply of material was also said to be going to retransfer to the USSR in the near future. Additional members of the Soviet construction staff at the airfield included Major Kopnin (fnu), charged with concrete and excavation work, and Mrs. Tranikova (fnu), main bookkeeper.

Comment. The present report on Schorfheide airfield confirms previous information on the status of construction work and further construction plans. [redacted] the expected arrival of a Moscow engineer who will allegedly decide on further construction work. Major Kopnin is reported for the first time, while the following personnel were previously reported: Colonel Khomotov of the Soviet construction staff Litvinov, chief of the Soviet construction headquarters at Schorfheide airfield; Lieutenant Colonel Romanenko of the same construction staff, chief engineer of the Soviet construction headquarters at Schorfheide airfield; Major Oleinik, designs engineer of the Soviet construction headquarters at Schorfheide airfield; Major Kovbaza, machine engineer of the same construction staff; Major Alekseyev of the Soviet construction headquarters at Schorfheide; and Mrs Tranikova, assigned to the same construction headquarters since March 1953.

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